

IN THE DRAWINGS:

Applicants respectfully request approval of the following drawing changes. Figure 5 is being amended to properly identify the components in accordance with the specification. Specifically, Figure 5 is being amended to properly identify control mount surface straight side 186 and control mount surface curved side 188. Applicants hereby submit a Replacement Sheet incorporating the changes to Figure 5. No new matter has been added.

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed March 2, 2006 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 8, 10-14 and 16-21 are now pending in this application. Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 8 and 10-13 stand rejected. Claims 14 and 16-21 have been withdrawn from further consideration.

Applicants note the objections to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.83(a). By the above amendment, Applicants have amended Claims 3, 5, 11 and 12. Applicants respectfully submit that the above amendment overcomes the objections to the drawings or renders such objections moot. For the reasons set forth above, Applicants request that the objections to the drawings be withdrawn.

Further, submitted herewith is a request for approval of drawing changes. Specifically, Applicants have amended Figure 5 to properly identify control mount surface straight side 186 and control mount surface curved side 188. Applicants respectfully request approval of the indicated drawing change. Upon approval of the drawing change, Applicants will submit substitute drawings incorporating the above-noted changes.

The rejection of Claims 1, 3-5 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 is respectfully traversed. The Examiner alleges that Claims 1, 3-5 and 7 are indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. By the above amendment, Applicants have amended Claims 1 and 3 to more distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. Claims 4 and 5 depend from Claim 3 and Claim 7 depends from Claim 1.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 112 rejections of Claims 1, 3-5 and 7 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 1, 3, 8, 10 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Design Patent 421,162 to Roberts (hereinafter referred to as "Roberts") is respectfully traversed.

Roberts illustrates a dishwasher door having curved top edge. The dishwasher door illustrated in Roberts includes a handle, as shown in Figures 3 and 4.

Claim 1 recites an outer door panel for an appliance door assembly, the outer door panel having a longitudinal axis and including “a frame comprising opposite lateral sides, a top edge, and a bottom edge; an outer surface extending from said frame, said outer surface outwardly curved between said lateral sides, said outwardly curved outer surface extending from said top to said bottom edges; and a recessed control mounting surface comprising a bottom side, said recessed control mounting surface extending inwardly and upwardly with respect to said longitudinal axis from said outer surface at said bottom side between said lateral sides, said recessed control mounting surface positioned a distance from said top edge, a portion of said outer surface extending between said control mounting surface and said top edge of said frame.”

Roberts does not describe nor suggest an outer door panel as recited in Claim 1. More specifically, Roberts does not describe nor suggest a recessed control mounting surface that extends inwardly and upwardly with respect to the longitudinal axis from the outer surface at the bottom side of the recessed control mounting surface between the lateral sides, as required by Applicants’ claimed invention. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Roberts illustrates a handle formed on an outer surface of a dishwasher door that extends outwardly with respect to a longitudinal axis of the dishwasher door. Accordingly, for the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Roberts.

Claim 3 depends from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claim 3 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claim 3 is likewise patentable over Roberts.

Claim 8 recites a unitary outer door panel for a dishwasher, the outer door panel including “a frame portion comprising opposing lateral sides, a top edge, a bottom edge, and a longitudinal axis; an outer surface portion extending between said opposing lateral sides and said top and bottom edges of said frame portion, said frame portion and said outer surface portion formed as a single piece, said outer surface portion outwardly curved between said lateral sides, said outwardly curved outer surface portion extending from said top to said bottom edges; and a control panel mounting surface within said frame portion and surrounded by said outer surface portion, said control panel mounting surface inwardly inclined with respect to said longitudinal axis such that said control panel mounting surface is mostly shielded by said outer surface portion.”

Roberts does not describe nor suggest a unitary outer door panel for a dishwasher as recited in Claim 8. More specifically, Roberts does not describe nor suggest a recessed control mounting surface that is inwardly inclined with respect to the longitudinal axis such that the control panel mounting surface is mostly shielded by the outer surface portion, as required by Applicants' claimed invention. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Roberts illustrates a handle formed on an outer surface of a dishwasher door that extends outwardly with respect to a longitudinal axis of the dishwasher door. Accordingly, for the reasons set forth above, Claim 8 is submitted to be patentable over Roberts.

Claims 10 and 11 depend from independent Claim 8. When the recitations of Claims 10 and 11 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 8, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 10 and 11 are likewise patentable over Roberts.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 102 rejection of Claims 1, 3, 8, 10 and 11 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,255,968 to Craven (hereinafter referred to as "Craven") is respectfully traversed.

Craven discloses an outer door 10 for a vending machine. The outer door includes a frame and a front panel coupled to the frame. An opening 26 is defined in the front panel for providing access to a compartment located behind the outer door.

Claim 1 recites an outer door panel for an appliance door assembly, the outer door panel having a longitudinal axis and including "a frame comprising opposite lateral sides, a top edge, and a bottom edge; an outer surface extending from said frame, said outer surface outwardly curved between said lateral sides, said outwardly curved outer surface extending from said top to said bottom edges; and a recessed control mounting surface comprising a bottom side, said recessed control mounting surface extending inwardly and upwardly with respect to said longitudinal axis from said outer surface at said bottom side between said lateral sides, said recessed control mounting surface positioned a distance from said top edge, a portion of said outer surface extending between said control mounting surface and said top edge of said frame."

Craven does not describe nor suggest an outer door panel as recited in Claim 1. More specifically, Craven does not describe nor suggest a recessed control mounting surface that

extends inwardly and upwardly with respect to the longitudinal axis from the outer surface at the bottom side of the recessed control mounting surface, as required by Applicants' claimed invention. In contrast to the present invention, Craven merely describes an opening defined within a front panel that provides access to a compartment located behind the outer door. The bottom surface of the opening is perpendicular with respect to a longitudinal axis of the outer door. Accordingly, for the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Craven.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 102 rejection of Claim 1 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 4, 5, 12 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roberts is respectfully traversed.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1 is patentable over Roberts. Claims 4 and 5 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 4 and 5 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 4 and 5 are likewise patentable over Roberts.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 8 is patentable over Roberts. Claims 12 and 13 depend from independent Claim 8. When the recitations of Claims 12 and 13 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 8, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 12 and 13 are likewise patentable over Roberts.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 4, 5, 12 and 13 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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